

Dear FCC Representative:

I am writing to protest, in the strongest possible terms, the current FCC plan to relax ownership restrictions on media outlets ("proceeding 02-277"). Maintaining a diversified media ownership is the only way to ensure that minority voices are heard in our democracy. As an academic specializing in media and culture, I feel strongly that, in considering appropriate revisions to existing policies, the FCC must consider how Americans actually DO receive their news and information, rather than how they COULD potentially receive it. Of course there are always obscure Internet news sources that contain diverse views, however because most Americans still get their news from a few sources, television being chief among them, diversity must be maintained within and between those popular media. The proposed revisions are dangerous and un-American, and I strongly urge the FCC to reconsider them before our country winds up with a media environment that is no more virtuous than that of Iraq or Myanmar, with unified corporate control replacing direct government control, but both effacing freedom of speech and diversity of views in the public sphere.

Gareth Barkin
Department of Anthropology
Washington University
Campus Box 1114
One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130
gsbarkin@artsci.wustl.edu
